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Bermuda Grass and Japan Clover.

Prof. Massey, editor of the Practical Farmer, wrote to the Southern Planter, recommending Bermuda grass for pasture. Floridians are rather inclined to despise Bermuda grass, and to think that this is not a good cattle country, because they cannot grow blue grass. A pasture of Bermuda grass on fertile soil, or land that has been heavily fertilized, will be found to furnish plenty of feed for a large herd of cattle.

I have been very much amused at the hysterical way Mr. Townes shows his dislike for Bermuda grass and Lespedeza. His article simply shows that climate and soil make all the difference in the world with crops grown in any locality. If Mr. Townes will go South and try to grow Blue grass, in competition with Bermuda, as a pasture grass, he will soon become convinced that there the Blue grass "is not in it" with the Bermuda. In Culpepper, I have no doubt that either Bermuda or Lespedeza will be little less than a nuisance, while South of Virginia, especially in the lower country of the South-Atlantic coast, there are no two plants that are anywhere near so valuable to the stockman.

A few years ago, I met, at Macon, Ga., a stockman from the Blue grass country of Kentucky, who was about to start a stock ranch in the Bermuda country, and he gave it as his opinion that Kentucky could not compete, in summer pasture, with the country where Bermuda is at2 home. Mr. French, of North Carolina, who came from a Blue grass section in Ohio, says that in North Carolina the Lespedeza makes a finer summer pasture than the Blue grass, as it is at its best when the Blue grass is apt to be browned by drought. Both would be only weeds in Culpepper, and Mr. Towns is right, so far as his particular location is concerned. I have never advised Bermuda north of Southeast Virginia, nor in the upper country of Virginia, North Carolina or East Tennessee. It is a hot-weather, sun-loving grass, and is especially suited to the Southern climate. I have seen a dense sod of it in the upper pine belt of South Carolina, on a sandy soil, where Blue grass would not grow at all. So it is only a matter of adaptation of the crop to the climate and soil that suits it. On strong clay soil, partially shaded, and regularly watered, with an occasional dressing of lime, Blue grass lawns can be made in the South, but if Mr. Townes attempted to get a field in Blue grass, from North Carolina, southward, he would soon find that he had undertaken a hopeless job, and would be glad when the ever-present Bermuda took possession. As you have suggested, there is no difficulty in getting rid of Bermuda with smothering crops, but in the proper Bermuda country, no intelligent man, who understands the value of the grass, wants to get rid of it, except in fields devoted to annual crops. It may not seem, on analysis, to be as good as Blue grass, but the best analysis is the animal and any animal that will not get fat on Bermuda will have a poor chance on Blue grass in hot weather.

The Runt Pig.

A West Virginia correspondent of the Epitomist says:

There used to be a common saying among farmers in this part of the country that the runt pig would make the largest hog and still it was a noticeable fact the runt was always the rejected one when a buyer was given choice to the litter. The runt when given a chance often outgrows the rest of the litter, yet if kept with the others he always stayed behind his mates. Frequently the runt really has the qualities necessary to make a good hog. He is often runted because he is a slow eater and his mates get more than their proper allowance of food. When the runt is separated from the rest of the herd he gets a regular allowance of food, has time to eat it without being disturbed, chews his food better than those that eat faster and as a result really gets more out of his food, grows faster and is the most profitable hog where only one or two are kept.

A Test.—A few years ago, I penned the runt pig of a litter of eight by himself; at eight weeks old he weighed only 20 pounds while the others averaged nearly a third larger. The pig was fed from June 1st to November 21st and was slaughtered, dressed weight at seven and one-half months, 197 pounds. This pig was never very highly fed and upon the whole was one of the most profitable pigs that I ever fed. The pig ate very slowly and it was evident that this was the cause, as is often the case, of his being the runt rather than any lack of vitality. A healthy runt is often a profitable pig but the pig which will not eat well and seems to not relish his food is an unprofitable piece of property.

The Empty Wagon.

Prof. H. E. Stockbridge wrote the following article for the New England Farmer:

A prominent agricultural journal recently offered its readers the following editorial advice: "Don't drive into town with an empty wagon, and don't drive back with an empty wagon. The latter is the more serious offence. If you can't think of anything else, buy a load of manure at the livery stable, and see the brown earth smile back at you with fields of living green."

The advice of load both ways is of itself doubtless good. When adopted as a rule of practice for the farmer and his team in traveling to and from town, the recommendation is most unfortunate. It is half true theory which can lead only to misfortune. The very nature of the farm business renders the practice of this theory absurd and impossible. The farm produces raw materials, bulky crops to be converted into more concentrated articles. The town is the market place for the bulky products of the farm, and is the source of supply of less bulky manufactured articles. In the very nature of things, therefore, more loads must leave the farm tthan can find their way back there from the town. The wagon mut, of necesity, often return empty. The load of wheat returns to the farm as a barrel of flour, the load of potatoes as a box of starch, the load of cotton or wool as a few yards of cloth. Possibly, the load of hay may return to the farm as a single sack of fertilizer. It is easily seen that any general attempt to load equally both ways must be useless and impossible.

Even where this natural obstacle to the double loading idea does not exist, there are two reasons which must render the practice uneconomical:

First, since town means market place, going there loaded means something to sell, cash received. Returning to the farm loaded means something bought, money spent. It must be perfectly apparent that the more often the wagon returns empty, in proportion to the full loads carried to town, the less money is spent from the cash received, the more money is saved. Full loads to town, and empty wagons returning may, therefore, easily illustrate profitable farm business.

The empty return wagon may also be accepted as evidence of the self-supporting farm, which always means independence, and often the largest net profit to the owner who produces at home much which his neighbors purchase in town.

Second, the advice to load the empty wagon with manure demands attention. Though stable manure is often indispensable, this condition is becoming constantly less frequent. Even on farms where much live stock is kept, convenience is often the chief reason for the use of manure.

Even the strongest advocates of manure admit that its value lies largely in its physical influence on the soil, and that mere plant food can usually be bought more economically in some commercial form. Green manuring and the growing of legumes, nitrogen gatherers, render the use of manure less and less necessary. Its purchase is becoming more and more confined to market gardens located close to the supply, and whose business prevents the rotation and use of legumes which render manure less important. It must be remembered that the very men who use manure to meet certain requirements are usually among the heaviest users of commercial fertilizers.

Admitting that manure is seldom indispensable, its use becomes simply a question of economy. Its cost to the consumer must determine the advisability of its use. It is unquestionably very valuable. It should never be wasted, and all that any farm can produce, under the system of cropping followed, should be supplied to the land producing it.

The question before us is the advisability of purchasing additional supplies. Shall manure be bought and hauled to the farm that the wagon may not return empty? The cost of hauling even though the wagon might otherwise return empty, must be included in the actual cost of the manure. The distance and kind of road must necessarily control this item. When the comparative value of manure and other fertilizers is considered, I believe that, on general principles, five miles will measure the limit of profitable manure hauling, under most favorable conditions of price and road. Under average conditions of necessity, price and cost of hauling, there is no economy in hauling average manure over two miles.

When it is remembered that a ton of average manure contains but about 25 pounds of actual plant food, phosphoric acid, nitrogen and potash, the doubtful economy of hauling a heavy load of manure long distances solely that